

Final Minutes

Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group

September 8-9, 2004

Veteran's Memorial Hall, Weaverville, CA

September 8, 2004

The meeting was open to the public.

9:30 AM convene

Members in attendance:

Member:

Arnold Whitridge (Chairman)
Ed Duggan
David Steinhauser
Dana Hord
Dan Haycox
James Feider
Richard Lorenz
Byron Leydecker
Serge Birk
Patrick Frost
James Spear

Representative Seat:

Safe Alternatives for Forest Environment
Willow Creek Community Service Department
Six Rivers Outfitter and Guide Association
Big Bar Community Development Group
Miners Alliance
City of Redding Electric Utility Department
Trinity County Resident
California Trout, Inc.
Central Valley Project Water Association
Trinity County Resource Conservation District
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Designated Federal Official: Mike Long Fish and Wildlife Service, Arcata, CA
(substituting for Mary-Ellen Mueller).

Members not in attendance:

Jeffrey Bryant, American Forest Research Council; Zeke Grader, Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Associations; Jimmy Smith, Humboldt County; Kevin Lewis, American Whitewater; Elizabeth Soderstrom, Natural Heritage Institute; Tim Colvin, Trinity Lake Owners Association; William Huber, South Fork Trinity River CRMP.

1. Welcome and Introduction; Adopt Agenda; Approve Minutes of June meeting

Arnold Whitridge opened the meeting and the members introduced themselves. Whitridge expressed a desire to add an item to the agenda (watershed lands acquisition by BLM). This item was briefly discussed at the end of the meeting.

Agenda. The development of the agenda has not always seemed satisfactory. The agenda packets do not reliably include necessary materials to study beforehand. Presentations on topics are not always satisfactory. Currently, the agenda is distributed to the TAMWG members two weeks before the meeting. Some of the members expressed a desire to have more involvement with development the agenda topics. Whitridge pointed out that, as the TAMWG is a Federal Advisory Committee and operates under the rules of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, the general topics of the meeting need to be published in the Federal Register two weeks before the meeting. This means these topics should be identified and submitted to the Designated Federal Official about six weeks before the meeting.

It was agreed that items for the agenda for the next meeting should be discussed during the prior TAMWG meeting and the chair should solicit additional member input about three weeks before the next meeting.

Minutes. The June meeting minutes were recorded in a more “court format” where detailed comments were recorded. In prior minutes, recording was more of a shorter, “summary format.” There were positive comments about the format of the June minutes, but some felt the 27 pages were excessive.

It was agreed that the minutes would be prepared in a more summary fashion that captured the flavor of the discussion, but not necessarily the individual comments. The draft of the minutes should be sent out to the membership within two weeks of the meeting.

Edits to the minutes. There were three suggested changes made to the minutes (by Birk, Whitridge and Duggan). There was a suggestion to email early drafts to the members of the Working Group within a week after the meeting and then allow the members to respond within a week with changes or edits.

Pat Frost made a motion to accept the minutes as amended.

Dan Haycox seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Public Comment

No public comments were offered.

3. Fall flows, monitoring activities, initial monitoring indications

Since no one from Fish and Wildlife Service was available to talk about the fall flows and fish monitoring, Monty Currier, fisheries biologist with the California Department of Fish and Game, presented fish monitoring data available from his department (**Attachment 1**).

Currier’s main points included: 1) the numbers of adult chinook returns are relatively low this year. 2) Coho returns to the Trinity are relatively high but over 95 % are of hatchery origin. 3) Straying of hatchery fish, particularly adult chinook, appear to be increasing in the basin. 4) Brown trout also appear to be increasing. All of these indications are not good news for native fish.

Richard Lorenz noted that chinook returns in the Sacramento are also down this fall. He asked why runs in both systems are down and why, with all the research, why we don't know what causes the variation in runs. Currier acknowledged it really isn't known what causes high and low runs. He cited the several general causes such as the "cyclic nature" of fish, ocean conditions, conflicts for water, and generally pressures from people.

Serge Birk suggested that a future agenda item be assigned for a formal presentation of fish data. He also stressed a need for the TAMWG to provide more guidance to speakers and presenters about what information the TAMWG is seeking. Mike Long from Fish and Wildlife Service apologized for a communication breakdown that caused a lack of information at this time.

Doug Schleusner passed out a handout that described recommended additional monitoring (**Attachment 2**). The recommendations were made by a group comprised of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Yurok Tribe, and Hoopa Tribe. There are six areas, the first four are currently being done: pathology, radio tracking, direct observation, water quality, stranding surveys, and riparian surveys.

Arnold Whitridge asked for comments on a letter he drafted to be sent to the Trinity Management Council (**Attachment 3**). The letter asks the Trinity Management Council (TMC) to seek a long-term solution to the flow issues in the Lower Klamath and avoid reliance on emergency flows from the Trinity River.

Discussion included whether to send the letter to other groups such as the Secretary of Interior, whether to include specifics or to simply attempt to motivate the TMC to act. There were concerns that the TMC has not acted on previous requests or recommendations made by the TAMWG.

James Feider made a motion send the letter with the 4th paragraph deleted, to replace "cure" with "long-term solution," replace "pursue" with "encourage," and insert a final paragraph that the TAMWG expects a response letter to this letter and the similar letter of last year.

Pat Frost seconded the motion.

The motion passed.

4. Science Program, framework process and progress, ESSA contract

Doug Schleusner, Trinity Restoration Program Director, introduced Rod Whittler hydrologist with the Bureau of Reclamation who has been detailed to the Restoration Program Office as a Technical Modeling and Analysis Group Branch Chief. Schleusner provided a Power Point handout detailing his presentation on the science program of the Trinity River Restoration Program (**Attachment 4**). The science program is one of six thrusts of restoration outlined in the Record of Decision. The Trinity River Flow Evaluation Study provides science basis for the Program as defined by the ROD. The Technical Modeling and Analysis Group is responsible for the science program. One problem with progress on the science program is lack of personnel. Whittler, additional support from Clair Stalnaker, and a contractor, (ESSA) have been brought on to help. A Science Framework is being developed and a conceptual model has been discussed.

There is a science workshop scheduled for October 13-15 at the Red Lion Motel, in Eureka, California.

Responding to questions, Schleusner emphasized that outside consultants were needed with the facilitation of the Science Framework but, ultimately, that the program would not be too dependent on outside consultants in the end.

5. FY 2005 Trinity River Restoration Program Budget

Doug Schleusner handed out a budget summary sheet detailing the planned expenditures for Fiscal Year 2005 (**Attachment 5**). The original estimate for the FY 2005 budget was \$13.5 million; the current estimate of funds as of 9/1/04 is estimated at \$11.2 million. The executive director presented a budget which reflected the reduction of funds. He also suggested that there was no need to fund the SEIS and other projects and as a result freed funding for other project. Doug invited comments relative to the budget changes.

The details of expenditures of the budget for FY 2005 still have to be approved by the TMC in the future.

Discussion focused on the following items: the expense of the TMC administration, remaining uncertainty of the budget, TAMWG recommendations.

It was agreed that the TAMWG recommend to the TMC to re-instate the \$40,000 and \$25,000 for watershed implementation (field work), and to re-instate the \$50,000 for watershed restoration. In other words the TAMWG recommended restoring levels to the original budgeted level for these items.

Richard Lorenz motioned to restore the \$740,000 in implementation projects that were cut from the B-team proposed budget.

The TAMWG discussed proposed funding levels for the TMC. Numerous motions and funding levels were suggested and discussed.

James Feider motioned to reduce TMC funding to 6/30/04, consistent with the executive director recommendation.

Motion seconded by James Spear.

Motion did not pass, mainly because lack of details, and justification for the budget requested for the item.

It was noted that the TAMWG membership is frustrated over the lack of specific information from the TMC about budget numbers and justification. It was perceived that this lack of information was part of a larger problem of lack of response from the TMC.

At 4:40 P.M. the schedule and the remaining agenda was discussed. The issue was whether the agenda could be completed by the end of the day. Some items such as public comment (no one voiced an interest when the question was raised) were deleted.

6. Program Evaluation Findings and Recommendations

Doug Schleusner provided a handout (**Attachment 6**) of TMC Disposition of Program Review Subcommittee Recommendations.

7. Executive Directors Report

This would be handled in a written report.

8. Charter renewal, member appointments

Mike Long also reported on the progress of nominations for TAMWG membership.

9. Public comments

No comment.

10. Announcements; assignments; schedule next meeting

Next meeting was tentatively scheduled for December 8, 2004.

The discussion focused on the upcoming agenda with the following topics: 1) Fall flows responses and monitoring; 2) What is the role of the technical representatives of TAMWG? 3.) Eligibility and reimbursement of expenses for TAMWG technical representatives; 4) Review of subcommittees and respective appointments; 5) Election of officers; 6) Discuss response from TMC letter (Klamath); 7) What can make the review of the budget process more effective?

It was agreed that the chairman send out a request for agenda items during the development of the agenda.

11. BLM lands acquisition

Pat Frost passed out a map showing land parcels to be acquired by BLM in Grass Valley in a land exchange. He thought that a letter of support from the TAMWG would be appropriate. However, since there was no longer a quorum of members, this was not pursued.

Field Trip on September 9, 2004

The day following the meeting, most of the TAMWG membership went on a field trip to three sites on the Trinity River. The focus of the field trip was to view the sites for bridge replacement where construction was in progress.

The group met at the Trinity Restoration Office in Weaverville where Ed Solbos gave a presentation on the progress of replacement of the private bridges. He also described the efforts to identify other private infrastructure that may be impacted by the planned higher flows. Solbos showed aerial photos of buildings in the floodplain and discussed their

modeling efforts to predict what would be inundated with the planned high water releases. One of the problems is that some building has occurred on the 100-year floodplain. To adequately predict where the new flood flows will occur, a greater density of channel cross-sections will be needed. There is an ongoing effort to collect this information.

The group then headed out in vans to view bridge construction at three sites. Solbos talked about the various details of the construction and its progress. He also gave insights about the careful negotiations that occurred to eventually get the agreements in place to have the federal government remove the old bridges, build new (higher) bridges and have the private landowners accept ownership and maintenance of the bridges. Most of the problems appeared to have been resolved and the bridges should be completed over the next several months.

List of motions that were passed:

Pat Frost made a motion to accept the minutes as amended.

Dan Haycox seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

James Feider made a motion send the letter with the 4th paragraph deleted, to replace “cure” with “long-term solution,” replace “pursue” with “encourage,” and insert a final paragraph that the TAMWG expects a response letter to this letter and the similar letter of last year.

Pat Frost seconded the motion.

The motion passed.

List of agreements:

It was agreed that items for the agenda for the next meeting should be discussed during the prior TAMWG meeting and the chair should solicit additional member input about three weeks before the next meeting.

It was agreed that the minutes would be prepared in a more summary fashion that captured the flavor of the discussion, but not necessarily the individual comments. The draft of the minutes should be sent out to the membership within two weeks of the meeting.

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It was agreed that the chairman send out a request for agenda items during the development of the agenda.

List of attachments:

Attachment 1: Fish monitoring data by Monty Currier, fisheries biologist with the California Department of Fish and Game.

Attachment 2: Doug Schleusner passed out a handout that described recommended additional monitoring for the Trinity River. The recommendations were made by a group comprised of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Yurok Tribe, and Hoopa Tribe.

Attachment 3: Arnold Whitridge asked for comments on a letter he drafted to be sent to the Trinity Management Council. The letter asks the Trinity Management Council to seek a long-term solution to the flow issues in the Lower Klamath and avoid reliance on emergency flows from the Trinity River.

Attachment 3a: Official letter that resulted from the discussion of draft letter (Attachment 3) to the TMC on Trinity River Restoration Program letterhead dated 9/14/04 with the TAMWG recommendation to encourage improve (prepared after the meeting).

Attachment 3b: Letter to TMC dated 9/8/03 from TAMWG that recommends that TMC endorse and pursue four recommendations Klamath solutions (attached after the meeting for the record).

Attachment 4: Doug Schleusner provided a Power Point handout detailing his presentation on the science program of the Trinity River Restoration Program

Attachment 5: Doug Schleusner handed out a budget summary sheet detailing the planned expenditures for Fiscal Year 2005

Attachment 6: Doug Schleusner provided a handout of Trinity Management Council Disposition of Program Review Subcommittee Recommendations